



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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PROPERTY OWNERS TO VOTE ON VECTOR CONTROL MEASURE *Ballot Measure Will Set Future Funding For Program To Fight Mosquitoes, Insects*

Over the next few days, all San Diego County property owners will receive a ballot in the mail that will determine the funding level for the County's Vector Control Program. The Mosquito, Vector and Disease Control Measure would provide needed funding to control mosquitoes and other vectors that can transmit diseases to humans, such as West Nile virus (WNV), Hantavirus and plague.

On March 23, 2005, the Board of Supervisors unanimously authorized the mailing of ballots to all San Diego property owners in accordance with the State Constitution, as amended by Proposition 218 in 1996. As provided by Proposition 218, the balloting will continue until June 22, 2005, when the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing to conclude the balloting and begin the vote count. For the measure to pass, it must receive support from 50% +1 of returned ballots.

The current annual vector control per parcel service charge has not been increased since it was established in 1989. Vector Control's aggressive fight against West Nile virus is exhausting the program's \$3.5 million budget, which is facing a \$1.3 million shortfall. This resulted in fewer monies available for continuing the current effort against West Nile virus and other vital vector control measures.

The fight against West Nile virus has paid off. Only two WNV cases were reported in San Diego last year, but neither case was confirmed to have originated in the County. With West Nile virus expected to be worse this year, the measure would raise \$7.3 million to continue the fight against the virus and to enhance programs to protect public health from all vector-borne diseases. There will be increased testing of mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus and of rodents and insects that transmit plague and Hantavirus.

Rates will vary depending on the property, with the proposed assessment rate for each property being included on each ballot. Ballots may be submitted three ways: using the self addressed envelope included with the ballots; delivered to the Vector Control office at 9325 Hazard Way, San Diego; or submitted at the end of the hearing on June 22, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. in room 310, 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego. Ballots received after the public comment portion of the June 22 hearing will not be accepted.

Property owners are encouraged to call (800) 253-9933 or (858) 694-2888 with their questions regarding this Measure. In addition, information is available at www.sandiegobugs.org